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Fifty-fifth session

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Summary record of the 30th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 21 November 2000, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Rosenthal (Guatemala)
*Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative
and Budgetary Questions:* Mr. Mselle

Contents

Agenda item 126: Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services

Agenda item 116: Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations (*continued*)

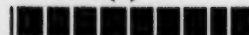
Agenda item 126: Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (*continued*)

Agenda item 133: Financing of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo

Organization of work

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 126: Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (A/55/436 and A/55/469; A/C.5/55/23)

1. Mr. Nair (Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services), introducing the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (A/55/436), the report of the Secretary-General on rules and procedures to be applied for the investigation functions performed by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (A/55/469) and the note by the Secretary-General on enhancing the internal oversight mechanisms in operational funds and programmes (A/C.5/55/23), said that the report contained in document A/55/436, which covered the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) during the period from 1 July 1999 to 30 June 2000, was the first annual report of OIOS to be submitted to the General Assembly since he had assumed his official duties in April 2000. He noted with satisfaction that the General Assembly, in resolution 54/244, had reaffirmed resolution 48/218 B, by which the Office had been established. A key to the Office's success to date had been its independence. He therefore welcomed the Secretary-General's assurance of his continued support in that regard. The Office had demonstrated that it was an objective source of reliable information and an agent of change in the United Nations, in particular with regard to strengthening internal controls and improving management performance. Nevertheless, he planned to review the existing structure and allocation of resources in order to ensure optimal efficiency and effectiveness. He noted, in that connection, that the United Nations was becoming progressively more field-based, whereas about 70 per cent of the Office's staff resources were deployed at Headquarters. He also intended to make a concerted effort to improve relations with management and Member States with a view to dispelling any notion that OIOS had a hidden agenda.

2. During the period under review, the Office had continued to coordinate with both the Board of Auditors and the Joint Inspection Unit and to participate in the annual meetings of the heads of internal audit bodies of the United Nations and multilateral financial institutions. The Investigations Section had sponsored the first Conference of Investigators of the United Nations System. The Office had made 968 recommendations to its clients,

representing an increase of 15 per cent compared with the previous year and those recommendations, if implemented, would result in cost savings and recoveries totalling \$17 million. In addition, OIOS had issued 82 audit reports and 35 investigation reports to management, transmitted 20 reports to the General Assembly and the Committee for Programme and Coordination, and issued 453 audit observations to clients. The Investigations Section had logged 287 new cases, an increase of 16 per cent over the previous year. However, its staff strength had remained the same, resulting in a growing backlog of investigation cases. Approximately 73 per cent of all OIOS audit recommendations made since July 1996 had been implemented. In order to improve the monitoring and reporting of its recommendations, the Office had recently developed criteria for identifying recommendations which had a significant impact on client operations and which would be subject to special follow-up action.

3. Chapter II described the Office's activities and accomplishments in the priority areas for oversight, namely, peacekeeping operations, humanitarian and related activities, human resources management and procurement. Audit coverage of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations had been expanded, and audits had been conducted at 11 missions in the field. Resident auditors posted to several major missions had provided continuous audit coverage, and investigations had been carried out into such matters as wire fraud, travel fraud and aviation safety. Regarding humanitarian and related activities, OIOS had audited the operations of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in 35 countries and at UNHCR headquarters. It had also expanded its audit coverage of the Office of the Iraq Programme and the Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator in Iraq because of the high value of oil revenues and the complexity of the Organization's responsibilities in that country. In addition, it had conducted audits of field support services at the headquarters of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and of the human rights field operations in Burundi, Colombia and Rwanda. In the area of human resources management, OIOS had undertaken a follow-up audit of the recruitment process and a review of the attendance and leave system. As to procurement, 77 recommendations had been made and there had been a follow-up audit of procurement reform.

4. Chapter III contained reports on the five oversight functions of audit and management consulting, investigation, inspection, programme performance monitoring and programme evaluation. The assignments undertaken by OIOS had been challenging and diverse.

5. The Office would strive to maintain the highest levels of efficiency, effectiveness and professionalism, but it must receive the necessary resources to maintain and upgrade the skills and competencies of its staff and to equip them with the appropriate information technology tools to perform their tasks.

6. The report of the Secretary-General on rules and procedures to be applied for the investigation functions performed by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (A/55/469) was provided in response to the request of the General Assembly in paragraph 17 of resolution 54/244. Like all offices in the United Nations charged with conducting investigative activities, the Investigations Section of OIOS operated in conformity with established United Nations regulations, rules and administrative instructions. The Section was also subject to the provisions of the General Assembly resolutions concerning OIOS, namely, resolutions 48/218 B and 54/244, and the provisions of the Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/273, which together constituted the Office's mandate. The Section's Manual was to be found on the Office's web site.

7. In adhering to the mandate to assist the Secretary-General in his reform programme, the Section undertook activities to prevent and detect waste, misconduct, abuse and mismanagement in the operations of the United Nations. To that end, it examined allegations received and ascertained the facts in order to substantiate or disprove such allegations. In that regard, the Section was committed to the concept of accountability. If the evidence collected showed prohibited activity, the Section would make recommendations to the programme manager concerned, which might include referral to a national jurisdiction for criminal prosecution and/or to the Office of Human Resources Management for disciplinary action. In addition, it might recommend ways of eliminating further occurrences. The Section would also work to clear the name of staff members who were wrongly or maliciously accused. If there was insufficient evidence to support an allegation, the

accused person would be given the benefit of the doubt.

8. The investigative activity of the Section, which was not a law enforcement body, constituted preliminary investigation activity as defined in administrative instruction ST/AI/371. That activity was conducted in such a way as to ensure the confidentiality of those making reports, the rights of the staff members involved, the protection from reprisals of those who contacted the Section, and in the interests of the Organization. The report had been reviewed by the Office of Legal Affairs and the Department of Management, and their views had been incorporated therein.

9. With regard to the note by the Secretary-General on enhancing the internal oversight mechanisms in operational funds and programmes (A/C.5/55/23), he said that, pursuant to the request of the General Assembly in resolution 48/218 B, the Secretary-General had prepared a detailed report containing recommendations on the implementation of that resolution as it pertained to the internal oversight functions of the United Nations operational funds and programmes, including methods by which the Office could assist such funds and programmes in enhancing their internal oversight mechanisms. Subsequently, the Assembly, in resolution 54/244, had requested the Secretary-General to update the information contained in that report and decided to consider the question at an early stage at its fifty-fifth session. The issuance of the updated report had, however, been postponed until March 2001, owing to the time needed to conduct consultations with the funds and programmes with a view to revisiting the recommendations contained in the previous report.

10. **Mr. Gaubert** (France), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the associated countries Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania and Slovenia, and, in addition, Norway, said that the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (A/55/436) demonstrated the value added to the Organization by OIOS. Since the Office's establishment six years earlier, it had made considerable progress; the creation of an enhanced mechanism to track its recommendations and its increased credibility as an internal source of services and advice augured well for the future.

11. The increase in United Nations activities required a parallel expansion of those of OIOS. There was a need for even more efficient planning of those activities, closer coordination with the Organization's other oversight bodies, reconsideration of the priority areas for oversight, and enhancement of the Office's working methods. His delegation wished to know, in that connection, what the results had been of the workshop for senior staff convened in late September 2000 to address those strategic oversight issues and it looked forward to the issuance of the report on enhancing the internal oversight mechanisms in operational funds and programmes.

12. With the intensification of United Nations missions, the Office must ensure that its resources were adequately balanced between Headquarters and the field. The enhancement and expansion of OIOS activities were key elements for the development of a management culture within the Organization. The European Union wished to express its confidence in the Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services. It welcomed his desire to improve relations with Member States and management, and it was sure that, under his leadership, the Office would remain a key partner in improving the quality of the Organization's management.

13. Mr. Lozinski (Russian Federation) expressed satisfaction with the Office's activities in the six years since its establishment. The value added to the United Nations by OIOS could be measured, inter alia, by the cost savings to the Organization. His delegation endorsed the priority areas for oversight set out in the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (A/55/436, para. 15). In particular, it welcomed the Office's activities in respect of peacekeeping operations and procurement. Of course, those activities would not produce results unless the Office's recommendations were scrupulously implemented. Overall, his delegation believed that the implementation rates achieved in the United Nations were satisfactory.

14. He expressed support for the Office's decision to review its existing allocation of resources and its current structure in order to ensure adequate oversight of field-based activities. While his delegation appreciated the audit coverage of peacekeeping operations during the period under review, it was concerned about the multiple violations of the Financial Regulations and Rules of the Organization,

the procurement instructions and the rules on payment of wages and mission subsistence allowance and about the cases of financial manipulation uncovered by OIOS, which had cost the United Nations hundreds of thousands of dollars. It was to be hoped that the appropriate lessons would be learned and that the persons responsible would be punished.

15. He welcomed the Office's cooperation and coordination with the Organization's other oversight bodies. Although his delegation paid particular attention to the annual report of OIOS, the reports on specific audits undertaken by the Office were also of keen interest to it. It agreed with the formula chosen by the Committee for the consideration of those reports and would take an active part in the discussions.

Agenda item 116: Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations (*continued*)

Agenda item 126: Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (*continued*) (A/55/353)

16. Mr. Nair (Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services), introducing the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of OIOS on the investigation into the misdirection of contributions made by Member States to the United Nations Environment Programme Trust Fund account (A/55/353), said that, between 12 February 1998 and 25 October 1999, 13 wire transfers of funds intended as contributions to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Trust Fund account at the Chase Manhattan Bank, totalling \$701,998, had been made by nine Member States. However, the funds had been deposited in error into the account of another account holder at Chase, Ms. Susan Rouse-Madakor. The number of the UNEP Trust Fund account had the prefix 001-1, whereas Ms. Madakor's account number had the prefix 001. Otherwise, the two account numbers were identical. The Investigations Section of OIOS had found that, although the United Nations Office at Nairobi, which administered the Trust Fund account, had provided the correct account number to the Member States, most of the funds transfer instructions had not included the fourth digit "1" of the UNEP Trust Fund account number. Also, the system used by Chase provided for wire transfer deposits to be made by account number only, without reference to the name of

the intended beneficiary. Thus, the transfers had been credited to the Rouse-Madakor account instead of that of UNEP. The United Nations Office at Nairobi had not acted in a prompt and efficient manner in identifying and addressing the misdirected contributions, thereby allowing additional deposits to be credited to the Rouse-Madakor account. In addition, Chase had been unresponsive to repeated requests from that office to look into the missing contributions and it had taken it six months from the initial notification to identify the incorrect deposits.

17. The Office of Internal Oversight Services had found that, while mistakes had been made, there was no evidence of wrongdoing on the part of United Nations staff members. It had made several recommendations with a view to improving the current process for the payment of contributions, as well as the communications between the United Nations Office at Nairobi and Member States, and between that Office and Chase. Both the United Nations Office at Nairobi and the Department of Management had accepted the report's findings and recommendations. Since the issuance of the report, Ms. Rouse-Madakor had been convicted of bank fraud and bank larceny. Sentencing was scheduled for February 2001.

Agenda item 133: Financing of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (A/55/477 and A/55/624)

18. **Mr. Halbwachs** (Controller), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the financing of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (A/55/477), explained that the report included the proposed budget for the maintenance of the Mission from 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001. The budget had initially been contained in document A/54/807, and had been estimated at \$461.3 million. Having reviewed that report, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) had submitted interim recommendations, and the General Assembly had authorized the Secretary-General to enter into commitments not to exceed \$220 million for the period from July to December 2000. It had also asked the Controller to submit a new budget.

19. The revised budget amounting to \$474,401,800 represented an increase of 11 per cent over the approved budget for the preceding period. The increase in military personnel costs would essentially be used for contingent-owned equipment and self-sustainment

for ten special police units and one canine unit. The reduction of about \$89 million for operational requirements resulted from the fact that the Mission had less need for procurement in the current financial period than it had had in the previous period.

20. The proposed budget provided for a net increase of 909 posts; the breakdown of transfers and new posts was presented in chapter VIII. The Mission's structure, too, had been modified; the Office of Gender Affairs had transferred to the Civil Administration, and the Office of Human Rights had been expanded to cover community affairs, in accordance with a recommendation of the Advisory Committee. The Civil Administration had also been restructured following the signing in December 1999 of an agreement setting up the Joint Interim Administrative Structure, which had initiated the process of setting up interim institutions for self-government. Twenty local administrative departments had subsequently been identified, each of which was to be directed by a team comprising one international and one local co-head. In addition, a Monitoring Unit and an Office of Statistics had been established. The Humanitarian Affairs pillar had, as planned, been phased out by June 2000. At the same time, a Special Programme for International Judicial Support in Kosovo had been launched by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General with the aim of restoring an independent, impartial and multi-ethnic judiciary.

21. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the report of ACABQ (A/55/624), said that the revised estimates of \$474.4 million proposed by the Secretary-General in his report (A/55/477) superseded the estimates he had presented in document A/54/807 for the period 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001. The Advisory Committee had recommended; and the General Assembly had assessed, \$220 million for UNMIK for the first six months of the financial period starting on 1 July 2000.

22. The report of ACABQ contained detailed comments and recommendations based on the experience and information it had gained during a five-day visit to UNMIK in June 2000. For example, on the question of the Special Programme of International Judicial Support for Kosovo, the manner of the support originally proposed by the Secretary-General had changed after the Advisory Committee's visit and its discussions with officials of the Mission and with

international judges and a prosecutor at the district court of Mitrovica. As could be seen from paragraphs 30 to 37 and 42, ACABQ had, subject to the conclusions and recommendations in paragraphs 59 to 61, agreed with the proposals of the Secretary-General in that regard. In that connection, he drew attention to paragraphs 36 and 37 of the report.

23. With regard to the proposals for the Office of the Special Representative (paras. 20 to 26), he said that, while in Kosovo, the Advisory Committee had been able to appreciate the difficulty inherent in the pillar concept, particularly with respect to coordination, and the additional costs resulting from that concept. It concluded that there was room for considerable streamlining, but it recognized the prerogative of the Special Representative to organize his office as he deemed appropriate. Taking that and the other factors referred to in the report into account, ACABQ recommended a net increase of 30 posts rather than the 51 requested.

24. As a result of its visit, the Advisory Committee recommended approval of the request to reclassify two D-1 posts for the heads of two regional offices to the D-2 level (para. 40) and the reclassification of two posts for the Deputy Director and the Director of the Office of Political Affairs from the P-5 and D-1 to the D-1 and D-2 levels respectively (para. 22).

25. Referring to the Advisory Committee's comments (para. 11) on the developments that had taken place since its visit to Kosovo, he said that the potential effects of those changes had also been taken into account in a number of its comments and recommendations.

26. As could be seen from paragraph 61 of the report, ACABQ recommended an appropriation of \$450 million for UNMIK, taking into account the \$220 million already authorized by the General Assembly. The additional assessment would therefore be \$230 million. The Secretary-General should exercise his normal flexibility in administering the appropriation authorized by the General Assembly, taking fully into account the comments and observations of ACABQ, particularly those related to posts.

27. **Ms. Silot Bravo** (Cuba) said that her delegation noted with concern the considerable amount of resources proposed for the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and supported the comments made by the Advisory

Committee pertaining to the size of the budget allocated to it. Concerning the strengthening of the judicial system, her delegation had doubts as to the solution proposed, which would involve the use of international judges instead of the promotion and development of a local judicial system administered by domestic courts. She wondered how the proposed courts would interact with those of Yugoslavia. Another subject of concern was the trend towards the assignment of high-level posts within the Mission; that could make it excessively bureaucratic and would thus set a bad example for the territory as it prepared for future self-administration. She asked whether more information could be provided on how the UNMIK budget and the Kosovo consolidated budget were linked. Lastly, she said that her delegation welcomed the proposals aimed at improving the structures to deal with ethnic problems in order to ensure a lasting and sustainable peace in the territory.

28. **Mr. Lamek** (France), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the associated countries Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Turkey, and, in addition, Norway, said that the report of the Secretary-General demonstrated the scope of the work done by UNMIK. Just a little more than a year after the operation had been initiated, the Mission had already been able to terminate the activities of the humanitarian affairs pillar. The activities of UNMIK had made a new beginning possible and institution-building efforts were continuing. As for the Civil Administration, the European Union noted that the Mission had succeeded in setting up an administration founded on the rule of law. While those efforts were encouraging, it was clear that more work was needed. The European Union supported the analysis presented by the Advisory Committee which had underscored the priority that must be given to policing, judiciary activities and the operation of the newly established administrative structures. It welcomed the recommendation that the 377 new posts requested by the Secretariat for the Civil Administration should be authorized, and supported the Advisory Committee's view that the budget should be slightly reduced, as savings could be realized, for example because of the slow deployment of police units and delays in spending on other items.

29. **Mr. Chandra** (India) expressed support for the conclusions and recommendations contained in the

report of the Advisory Committee. He sought clarification concerning the statement by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee, who had said that the Secretary-General should exercise normal flexibility in implementing the Advisory Committee's recommendations, particularly those related to posts.

30. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) explained that, in its report, the Advisory Committee had not specified the number of posts to be eliminated, although it had made recommendations regarding the overall amount to be provided for the Mission. Since a percentage of the budget was for staff costs, if the total amount requested by the Secretary-General was reduced, the recommended reductions would necessarily have repercussions on posts. However, it was ultimately for the Secretary-General, using his own judgement, to indicate which posts should be maintained, left vacant or cut, in accordance with the needs of the Mission. The Advisory Committee had followed such procedures from time to time in its recommendations for other missions.

Organization of work

31. **The Chairman** drew the Committee's attention to a list, which had been prepared by the secretariat of the Committee and approved by the Bureau, of 16 time-sensitive items and issues that would require action by the Fifth Committee during the main part of the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly. In order to conclude its consideration of all of the items and issues on the list, the Committee would need to continue to work beyond 1 December, the date by which it had been mandated by the General Assembly to complete its work. With the concurrence of the Committee, he proposed to address a letter to the President of the General Assembly requesting an extension of the work of the Fifth Committee until Wednesday, 20 December 2000; that would allow the General Assembly to consider the Committee's reports not later than Friday, 22 December. All of the other items and issues on the Committee's agenda would be deferred until the resumed session in 2001.

32. During an exchange of views in which **Ms. Peña** (Mexico), **Mr. Elgammal** (Egypt), **Ms. Aragon** (Philippines), **Mr. Lamek** (France), on behalf of the European Union, **Mr. Hassan** (Nigeria), on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, **Mr. Chandra** (India), **Mr. Alatrash** (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), **Ms. Johnson**

(Canada), **Mr. Tang Guangting** (China), **Ms. Geman** (United States of America), **Mr. Ahounou** (Côte d'Ivoire), **Mr. Fujii** (Japan) and **Ms. Powles** (New Zealand) took part, **Ms. Silot Bravo** (Cuba) proposed that agenda item 123, on human resources management, should be included in the list of items and issues.

33. **The Chairman** said that the list should not be viewed as a rigorous commitment to adopt final decisions on all of the items. It was merely an attempt to rationalize the Committee's work. He took it that the Committee agreed to include agenda item 123, on human resources management, in the list and to proceed with its work on the basis of the list, as orally revised.

34. *It was so decided.*

35. **The Chairman** said he took it that the Committee agreed that the Chairman should address a letter to the President of the General Assembly requesting an extension of the work of the Fifth Committee until Wednesday, 20 December 2000.

36. *It was so decided.*

The meeting rose at 5.10 p.m.



General Assembly

Fifty-fifth session

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Summary record of the 31st meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 22 November 2000, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Rosenthal (Guatemala)
*Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative
and Budgetary Questions:* Mr. Mselle

Contents

Agenda item 126: Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (*continued*)

Agenda item 116: Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations (*continued*)

Other matters

Organization of work

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 126: Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (continued) (A/55/436, A/55/469; A/C.5/55/23)

1. **Mr. Hays** (United States of America) said that the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) (A/55/436) showed the comprehensive nature of its work within the United Nations and reaffirmed the justification for the renewal of its mandate. Its establishment had been one of the most important reform measures taken by the General Assembly in recent years. The Office continued to make a positive impact on the Organization in the areas of programme performance, accountability, economy and efficiency.

2. One of the most important indicators of the success of OIOS was the 73 per cent implementation rate of its recommendations by offices and programme managers. Since OIOS had expertise in planning and conducting many different types of evaluations, it should continue to play a key role in developing standard evaluation methodologies and training staff to use them. In carrying out its challenging mandates, OIOS must also be assured that its own resources were in line with its needs. His delegation was therefore pleased that attention was being paid to that area. Since field activities were frequently at risk for management problems, OIOS auditors and investigators must be able to review them regularly. His delegation also supported the need for OIOS to provide the full range of oversight services to new activities, as well as the many United Nations funds and programmes.

3. Turning to specific aspects of the report, he noted that the implementation of the global vehicle procurement project had saved substantial amounts of procurement funds for peacekeeping missions, but that it had not been carried out properly in several areas, and had thus cost the Organization \$1.2 million more than necessary. His delegation would like to know why it had not been possible to capitalize on that laudable procurement reform and what had been done to get the project back on track.

4. It also appeared that humanitarian assistance activities in the field were vulnerable to mismanagement and non-compliance. In the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), for example, the auditors had found numerous instances of undocumented expenditures and

field projects which had not been properly reviewed and terminated. He asked what changes had been implemented to ensure that unsuccessful projects were closed down and unspent funds recovered.

5. A growing amount of responsibility had been placed on the Office of the Iraq Programme to oversee implementation of the oil-for-food programme and other humanitarian activities. His delegation was concerned, however, to read of poor contracting practices and project implementation which had led to millions of dollars in added costs, and it requested an update on management improvements.

6. The activities of the High Commissioner for Human Rights had also been cited for a variety of management shortcomings. It would be valuable to hear what had been done to strengthen management while minimizing delays in critical processes.

7. The report showed that the attendance and leave system was unwieldy, costly and ineffective, and it was disappointing that the implementation of the Integrated Management Information System (IMIS) was not likely to achieve efficiencies in that area. He wished to know how the Secretariat intended to make the system more efficient.

8. The significant case of travel fraud at the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, first reported in the previous year's report of OIOS, had resulted in a prison sentence for the person responsible. Since that fraud had been committed partly because of weak internal controls and poor supervision, he asked what had been done to remedy those conditions.

9. Finally, the wasteful practices reported at the publishing office in Geneva were alarming; he requested a full report on efforts to restructure the unit and hold managers accountable.

10. In conclusion, he suggested that the Committee should take note with appreciation of the report on rules and procedures to be applied for the investigation functions performed by OIOS (A/55/469), which had been submitted in accordance with General Assembly resolution 54/244.

11. **Ms. Silot** (Cuba) said that the annual report of OIOS giving an overview of its activities (A/55/436) was highly useful. However, her delegation would welcome more detail on the recommendations and changes proposed in paragraph 8. It also welcomed the fact that costs had been recovered through OIOS

activities. The topic was a sensitive one, however, and she would like to hear further discussion of the distinction between recovery of costs and savings, and whether there had been any impact on the programme budget. The information on peacekeeping operations describing misdirection of funds and lack of regulation was also useful. In the light of its findings, OIOS should review any future requests for increased funding for such operations.

12. In the view of her delegation, OIOS should have a role in the implementation of the recommendations of the Millennium Summit and the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (A/55/305-S/2000/809), especially with regard to the delegation of authority over resources, both financial and human, to programme directors, because of the potential problems which went along with such decentralization. With regard to the need expressed by OIOS for more resources for audit and investigation, the same review criteria that were applied to other departments should be applied in that case.

13. Her delegation was awaiting an update on the scope of the OIOS mandate under General Assembly resolution 54/244 to improve the oversight mechanisms for United Nations funds and programmes. Specific regulations were needed to govern that mandate, together with a regular framework for the relationship of OIOS with national judicial authorities.

14. **Mr. Hamidullah** (Bangladesh) said that the main function of OIOS was to assist the Secretary-General in his management functions and in the management of the various departments and organizations of the United Nations system. The basic thrust of its activities was damage mitigation, but a compilation of best practices would help to replicate improvements made throughout the system.

15. With regard to the report on enhancing the internal oversight mechanisms in operational funds and programmes (A/C.5/55/23), he requested more information on how the discrete investigations mentioned in paragraph 2 were undertaken. His delegation viewed positively the decision referred to in paragraph 5, and would like to know how its implementation was proceeding.

16. **Mr. Alatrash** (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) commended OIOS on the progress it had made in improving internal oversight, as reflected in its report (A/55/436). He was particularly interested in the

implementation rates for the Office's audit recommendations (Box I). It would clearly be in the interests of the United Nations system to implement those recommendations fully, but he wondered if any additional measures were envisaged in the event that they were not fully implemented.

17. The internal oversight bodies and audit services within United Nations funds and programmes had an important role to play in controlling fraud and misconduct, especially in peacekeeping operations. He would like to know if the Office had planned any preventive measures — such as unannounced spot checks — to combat that kind of abuse in the field.

18. **Mr. Nair** (Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services), in reply to the comments of the representative of the United States of America, said that OIOS received periodic reports that allowed it to monitor progress in the implementation of its recommendations, but it would be inappropriate for him to comment on the follow-up by individual departments to those recommendations. OIOS was already working on the development of standard evaluation methodologies and on staff training, and intended to step up its efforts in those areas.

19. With regard to the comments made by the representative of Cuba, he was aware that in many ways General Assembly resolution 54/244 supplemented resolution 48/218 B. Measures were being developed to improve monitoring and would be reported to Member States in due course. On the difference between cost savings and cost recovery, the latter referred to funds that had somehow been "lost" and recovered, while the former referred to savings made as a result of greater efficiency achieved as a result of OIOS recommendations to cut out waste or improve management practices. With regard to the follow-up to the Millennium Summit, OIOS was involved in implementing the Brahimi report (A/55/305-S/2000/809), particularly in areas where the delegation of authority to the field was being sought. Authority could only be delegated if a system of checks and balances was in place to ensure that it was not abused. On the question of resources, he said that there were areas, especially with regard to investigations, where the workload required additional resources; OIOS would submit any requests for more resources through the usual channels. He was pleased to hear that previous OIOS annual reports would be taken into

account in the informal consultations, even though they had not officially been endorsed.

20. There appeared to be some uncertainty over the mandate of OIOS in relation to United Nations funds and programmes. One way in which OIOS could help those funds and programmes with their internal oversight services without encroaching on their authority was to follow the example of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), where he, as Under-Secretary-General, had a permanent seat on the internal oversight committee. He was thus in a position to give well-informed advice while UNDP was able to conduct its oversight activities as it saw fit.

21. On the question of setting up a regulatory framework for investigative functions, he said that the regulations governing those functions were already spelled out in the various bulletins issued by the Secretariat, although the Secretariat might like to consider whether they needed to be streamlined or supplemented.

22. In response to the comments of the representative of Bangladesh, he said that pre-empting problems by helping managers to manage their programmes better was part of the mandate of OIOS. However, management consultancy needed to be deployed judiciously if it was not to swallow up all the available resources, and should only be expanded if it was possible to do so without cutting down on other services.

23. Funds and programmes referred cases of fraud and so on to OIOS because almost none of them had any investigative capacity of their own. OIOS normally only gave advice, although if resources permitted or the seriousness of the case merited it, it would carry out an investigation. One possible way to fund such investigations would be to have the funds and programmes reimburse OIOS for its work. Without further resources, OIOS was not in a position to expand its investigative activities.

24. In reply to the questions asked by the representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, he said it might be useful to make a separate list of the recommendations that would have the most far-reaching impact if they were implemented, rather than simply present statistics on the percentage of all recommendations that were implemented, as was currently done. On the question of preventive measures, he had suggested to the United Nations

Controller that funds might be withheld from funds or programmes until they had followed up on the recommendations made by OIOS. The idea of holding spot checks deserved to be looked into more closely, but the presence in the field of a sufficient number of resident auditors and investigators was probably more important. Some were already in place and the system had worked quite well so far.

25. **The Chairman** said that the Committee had thus concluded its general discussion of agenda item 126.

Agenda item 116: Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations (continued) (A/55/353)

26. **Mr. Repasch** (United States of America) said that his delegation appreciated the complex and detailed report on the investigation into the misdirection of contributions made by Member States to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Trust Fund account. It noted with interest that, as mentioned in the first paragraph of the summary, Chase Manhattan Bank had restored the full amount of the misdirected funds as an accommodation. He wondered whether "accommodation" was the term chosen by OIOS or by the Bank to describe its response, as the Bank had been at least partly responsible. The report also stated that OIOS would evaluate the compliance of the United Nations Office at Nairobi with its recommendations, and he wondered if any report was available. With regard to the recommendations made by Chase Manhattan Bank, he asked if the United Nations had implemented them or if it had found other means to prevent a recurrence. Finally, he commended those Member States which had alerted the United Nations to the fact that their contributions had not been recorded.

27. **Mr. Nair** (Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services) said that the recommendations made by OIOS in the case of the misdirected funds had been accepted by all concerned, including the Chase Manhattan Bank. By returning all the money to the UNEP Trust Fund account, Chase had acknowledged that it had been in the wrong, even if it was following a practice that was fairly common in the United States of using only a number, without a name, to identify an account. The OIOS recommendations to help Member States and UNEP keep track of contributions should prevent a recurrence of the problem, but he did not know if those recommendations had yet been put into practice.

28. **The Chairman** suggested that the Committee should take note of the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the investigation into the misdirection of contributions made by Member States to the UNEP Trust Fund account (A/55/353).

29. *It was so decided.*

30. **The Chairman** said that the Committee had thus concluded its general discussion of agenda item 116, and requested the Rapporteur to report thereon directly to the General Assembly.

Other matters

31. **Ms. Silot** (Cuba) said it was regrettable that, during the previous day's informal consultations concerning the Board of Auditors, the representative of Canada had suggested that certain delegations were not taking the Committee's work seriously, as if they did not wish to complete it in the time available. He had even suggested that the Group of 77 should hold fewer meetings during the session. She called on the representative of Canada to respect the sovereignty of Member States and the protocol governing relations between delegations. Her delegation would continue to work closely with other delegations to complete the work allocated to the Committee.

Organization of work

32. **Mr. Hassan** (Nigeria) said that several members of the Group of 77 and China had requested that the forthcoming Ramadan fast should be taken into account in scheduling the meetings of the Committee.

33. **Mr. Acakpo Satchivi** (Secretary of the Committee) said that afternoon meetings would be suspended between 4.15 p.m. and 5.15 p.m. and end at 6.30 p.m., and that evening meetings would be held between 7 p.m. and 10 p.m.

The meeting rose at 11.15 a.m.

**General Assembly**

Fifty-fifth session

Official RecordsDistr.: General
7 December 2000

Original: English

Fifth Committee**Summary record of the 32nd meeting**

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 27 November 2000, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Rosenthal (Guatemala)
*Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative
and Budgetary Questions:* Mr. Mselle

Contents**Agenda item 117: Programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 (*continued*)*****Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations***

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00-76309 (E)



The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

Agenda item 117: Programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 (continued)

Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (A/55/305-S/2000/809, A/55/502 and A/55/507 and Add.1)

1. The Secretary-General said that the critical task of strengthening the Organization's effectiveness and capacity in the area of peace and security, as proposed in the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (A/55/305-S/2000/809), was of paramount importance for the ability of the United Nations to carry out an essential part of its mission. He had established the Panel in the belief that the Organization could not continue to do business as usual in its peace operations. Too often and in too many places over the past decade, inadequate mandates and insufficient means and Headquarters support had led to calamities for the vulnerable people whom the United Nations sought to serve, for the brave and committed peacekeepers in the field and for the Organization itself. The gravity of that record was indisputable; the question, rather, was whether the world community would collectively rise to the challenge and whether the representatives of the Member States would help the Organization to help the peoples they represented by authorizing the changes and improvements called for in the Panel's report. While he did not intend to pre-empt the conclusions of the forthcoming report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, he wished to highlight the urgency and importance of the issue.

2. The Panel's report examined a whole range of areas in which the United Nations had been too slow, too tied up in red tape, too weak or too fragmented to deal effectively with conflicts. From early warning to mission planning to the use of modern communications and information technology, the report represented the most significant effort to improve crisis response within the United Nations since the latter's founding. The Organization and the Member States must answer its call. He was aware of the larger issues surrounding his emergency request: the fact that strengthening Headquarters capacity would not solve all the problems currently facing peacekeeping; the need for Member States to summon the political will to supply the Organization with the troops and civilian personnel it

needed to succeed; and the concern that not all peacekeeping duties were shared equally by the Member States and that not all missions mandated by the Security Council received equal or even adequate support. He shared the concern of the many delegations which had deplored the "commitment gap" and the lack of political will to contribute to peacekeeping in Africa.

3. There was a basic and urgent need not only to address those fundamental political and structural issues, but also to strengthen the ability of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to support and guide operations in the field. It was in the field that the Organization failed or succeeded. It was on the ground, with an effective military and civilian presence and with competent command and control structures, where the Organization could help or hinder, and where it must be strengthened. That was the first priority: to achieve real and immediate improvements in the Organization's operational capacity. That was truly an emergency requirement that demanded emergency action. If the Committee deferred action on the emergency package, peacekeeping personnel in the field and the peoples they sought to serve would inevitably be the ones who suffered, and the Organization's operational capabilities would inevitably be weakened on the ground.

4. The resources proposed represented less than half of one per cent of the current regular budget appropriations, and those proposed in respect of the support account represented less than one and a half per cent of current peacekeeping costs. Those amounts were not significant, but they could make a very significant difference to the Organization's ability to provide its peacekeepers with the support they needed and to their ability to carry out the mandates which the Member States had given them.

5. The emergency request had two objectives: first, to provide more effective and sustained support to the approximately 58,000 peacekeeping personnel currently deployed in the field, who put their lives on the line every day to carry out the mandates entrusted to them, often under very risky and unpredictable conditions; and, second, to meet the urgent need for people to put in place systems and procedures that would ensure that when the next crisis arose, as it surely would, the Organization would be better equipped to cope with it. That reform was clearly needed, but it could not be implemented without

resources. It was unrealistic to expect that it could be implemented by officials whose capacity was already stretched to the breaking point by the demands of running the current operations; the Committee was undoubtedly aware of the rapid and unforeseen growth in United Nations peacekeeping operations over the past 18 months.

6. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations must be provided with sufficient staff and an appropriate structure to enable it to plan, deploy, manage and support peacekeeping operations effectively. The Panel's proposals, if implemented, would achieve that essential goal. The proposals addressed a wide range of needs, including structural changes such as the establishment of an Office of Military and Civilian Police Affairs, headed by an Assistant Secretary-General, which would include a stand-alone Civilian Police Division and a strengthened and restructured Military Division. That Office would give greater priority to the relations between the Department and troop- and police-contributing countries, and would allow the Department to strengthen dialogue and consultations between the Secretariat, the Security Council and troop and police contributors throughout the life of a mission, in order to enable all parties to make informed decisions on all aspects of the operation. A frank exchange of information and open dialogue were essential if the Organization was to retain the trust which Member States must have in it if they were to be willing to provide the resources needed and to assume the risks inherent in the deployment of peacekeepers.

7. Other proposals included the transformation of the Lessons Learned Unit into the Peacekeeping Doctrine and Best Practices Unit and the establishment of a small Criminal Law and Judicial Advisory Unit, a Gender Unit and a public information unit. All those proposed changes reflected the multidisciplinary nature of peacekeeping in the twenty-first century, and must be authorized if the Organization was to keep up with the changes in the environment facing peacekeepers.

8. Equally important was the challenge of equipping the Organization with the tools it needed to anticipate and understand the root causes of the conflicts it was asked to address. Recently, the Security Council had reaffirmed its belief that the Secretariat's information-gathering and analysis capacity must be improved. The proposed establishment of the Executive Committee on Peace and Security Information and Strategic Analysis

Secretariat would answer that need. A small, multidisciplinary unit made up of staff from different backgrounds, it would serve the vital function of providing cross-cutting analysis to the Executive Committee on Peace and Security. It would also make it possible for the Organization to make much better use of the wealth of information already existing within the United Nations system and in open public sources; ensure that the humanitarian and development perspectives were incorporated into strategic analyses and mission planning; facilitate better cooperation and coordination between the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and other parts of the system, as called for by Member States; provide analytical support for the system's formulation of policy options and medium- to long-term strategies of a cross-cutting nature, which increasingly required a multidisciplinary approach; and help to improve the Organization's ability, in close collaboration with the Member States concerned, to analyse and focus its resources on the root causes of potential conflicts.

9. In the Millennium Declaration, the participating Heads of State and Government had resolved to make the United Nations more effective in maintaining peace and security by giving it the resources and tools it needed for conflict prevention, peaceful resolution of disputes, peacekeeping, post-conflict peace-building and reconstruction, and had requested the General Assembly to consider the Panel's recommendations expeditiously.

10. He shared the concern of many members of the Committee about the need to give higher priority to resources for development. He had consistently called on Member States to increase their development assistance and he hoped that the international community's attention would be focused on that issue by the forthcoming high-level event on financing for development. It would be folly, however, to imagine that Member States could make adequate resources available for development by preventing the United Nations from developing adequate peacekeeping capacity. Development and peacekeeping were not alternatives, but necessary complements to each other, and resources were needed for both. The worst enemy of development was war. For countries in conflict and for their neighbours, peace was a prerequisite for development, and money spent on peacekeeping and conflict prevention would help to create or preserve the

conditions in which development could take place. If the changes proposed by the Panel were accepted, the Organization would be better equipped and better prepared to help protect the peoples of war-torn countries from further suffering. If not, it was those peoples who would pay the price, not the powerful or the privileged of the world. For the latter, it was a matter of improving the Organization's capacity; for the poor and powerless, it could literally be a matter of life and death. The Committee must not forget that essential truth in deliberating on how best to strengthen the Organization's mission in the area of peace and security. The needs were clear, the demands were urgent and the solutions were within reach.

11. Another issue about which he felt very strongly was staff security. It was simply unacceptable that United Nations staff, who often braved dangers to which many armies did not expose their soldiers, should be given anything less than the international community's utmost support. Too many tragedies had occurred over the past year, from Africa to West Timor, and he hoped that the Committee would take the necessary measures to enable the Organization to give that issue the highest priority. He had proposed a number of measures for professionalizing and strengthening the Organization's security management system through changes in the number of personnel, the training they received, the services they provided and the equipment they used. Clearly, the current system of funding did not work. He therefore hoped that the Committee would endorse his recommendations so that the United Nations could take effective action to improve the security and safety of its staff. That was surely the least to which they were entitled and the least that the Member States and the Organization could do for them.

12. Mr. Levitte (France), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the associated countries Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania and Slovakia and, in addition, Liechtenstein, said that those countries fully supported the proposals contained in the Secretary-General's report (A/55/502), which should be implemented without delay. The report of the Panel emphasized the urgency of the changes needed to improve support for peacekeeping operations throughout the world, particularly in Africa, and to ensure that the United Nations Secretariat was fully capable of handling the day-to-day conduct of

peacekeeping operations. For the many African countries which faced serious crises, the Organization's support was essential, as it was often the only assistance they received to help them to restore peace.

13. The United Nations support for conflict resolution was only one of its many missions. Priority must also be given, in particular, to United Nations action to promote development. Those two approaches were, however, complementary. The effort which Member States were being asked to make to begin implementing the Panel's recommendations was in no way a substitute for the effort they must make to promote development. The cost of that effort seemed very reasonable when compared to the levels of the regular and peacekeeping budgets.

14. Nearly three months after the Millennium Summit, the Member States had an obligation to deliver results. Any failure to take action immediately, or at least by the end of the year, to implement the initial proposals of the Secretary-General would be incomprehensible to Governments and public opinion. He was pleased to note that the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, the Fifth Committee and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) were discussing the aspects of that vital issue that were within their competence, since that was the best way to develop a prompt and practical response to the priority needs identified in the Panel's report.

15. Mr. Kolby (Norway) said that it was the joint responsibility of all Member States to enable the United Nations to meet the increasingly complex challenges of peacekeeping. The growing demand for peacekeeping underscored the need to close the gap between the tasks which the Organization was asked to perform and the resources provided for that purpose. The zero nominal growth policy had become increasingly counterproductive both in terms of United Nations reform and in terms of enabling the Organization to respond to new challenges.

16. His Government welcomed the Panel's report and the Secretary-General's views on its implementation. Once the Panel's recommendations were implemented, they would significantly strengthen the Organization's capacity to plan and conduct complex peace operations. He strongly supported the proposals for the strengthening of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and other parts of the Secretariat involved

in the conduct of peace operations, as well as the proposal to establish the Executive Committee on Peace and Security Information and Strategic Analysis Secretariat, which would serve as an important early-warning tool that would strengthen the Organization's conflict prevention capacity. Such a secretariat would also be helpful to the Security Council in its work on mandates for future operations.

17. The proposals for an increase of \$7.5 million in the regular budget, with 35 additional posts, and an increase of \$14.7 million in the support account for peacekeeping operations, with 214 additional posts, to implement the proposals for the period from 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001 seemed very modest compared to the current level of the regular budget and peacekeeping costs. Resources for peace operations should not be increased at the expense of resources for development. The international community must take a long-term approach to development in order to build sustainable peace. Norway's security and development policy had long focused on a comprehensive approach to development and peace-building. Development could not take place without peace and stability. Peace depended on development and justice; those issues could not be separated.

18. Peacekeeping was one of the core tasks which the United Nations had been founded to perform. The recent expansion of the Organization's crucial role in that area, despite limited resources, demonstrated the continued importance of that task. His delegation supported the Panel's recommendations and the proposals for their implementation, and it accepted their financial implications. A prompt decision must be taken on the resource requirements for implementing the Panel's recommendations.

19. **Mr. Heinbecker** (Canada) said that the Secretary-General was to be commended for his leadership on the crucial issue of United Nations peace operations. The Panel appointed by him had made concrete and practical recommendations and had presented pragmatic and practicable ideas for change. The enhancement of the Organization's capacity to conduct peace operations would depend on effective partnerships between the Secretariat, the organs of the United Nations system, other international organizations, local civil societies and Member States. Already, there were signs that such partnerships were coalescing.

20. Some delegations attached less importance to the Panel's report than others. His delegation, for its part, considered the successful implementation of the Panel's recommendations to be crucial to the Organization's future. The Fifth Committee had an important role to play in that regard. The stakes transcended diplomatic games and anachronistic ideologies. He appealed to Member States that had the means, but apparently not the will, to fund United Nations reform to pay their assessed contributions on time and without conditions. The Organization's acknowledged failures were not a reason to abandon it. The current and prospective consumers of United Nations peacekeeping services should realize that the arguments of those who opposed the proposed peacekeeping reform lacked validity.

21. In response to some of the concerns that had been raised, he said that peacekeeping and peace-building could not be kept separate if the United Nations was to be able to respond to the multifaceted needs of countries affected by war, which included re-establishment of the rule of law, economic recovery, protection of rights, particularly minority rights, and good governance practices. Likewise, the experience of the past few years, when peacekeeping costs had risen from a low of \$600 million to a high of over \$2.5 billion, had shown that such increases need not lead to a reduction in funds for development. Indeed, the reverse was true: peace and security were preconditions for development, and no one would invest scarce funds in countries where they risked being consumed in conflict. Lastly, it was not true that the needs of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations were greatly exaggerated. The request for emergency resources should be considered in the context of the Millennium Declaration, in which Member States recognized the importance of enhancing the Organization's peacekeeping capacity. In that connection, he welcomed the steps already taken towards a comprehensive review of the Department, noting that the Panel recommended reforms that addressed comprehensively the problems that the use of gratis personnel had been intended to overcome.

22. Many Governments had lost faith in the ability of the United Nations to run peace operations. The longer the Organization's reputation was left to languish, the more reluctant Governments and populations would be to participate in those operations. Enhancing the Organization's capacity to plan and implement

complex operations was vital if the confidence of troop-contributing countries was to be re-established. In addition, troop contributors must be able to participate fully, as a matter of right, in Security Council consultations on the missions in which their troops were participating. They must also have access to the analysis and information available to the Secretariat.

23. Given the likelihood of new missions and the demands and complexities of the existing missions, there could be no doubt of the need to implement the Panel's recommendations and to find the necessary resources. Also, with approximately 58,000 personnel in the field, the number of support staff must clearly be increased. Provision of the resources requested by the Secretary-General would be a wise and cost-effective investment. The speed with which the request had been brought before the Committee was commendable and it was to be hoped that the Advisory Committee would finalize its report on the resource requirements for implementation of the Panel's report in a similarly expeditious manner.

24. Mr. Sun Joun-yung (Republic of Korea) said that his delegation, which had consistently supported the reforms undertaken by the Secretary-General, welcomed the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (A/55/305-S/2000/809) and looked forward to the issuance of the report of the Advisory Committee on the resource requirements for the implementation of the Panel's report. Strengthened strategic planning and coordination, effective mission guidance and streamlined procedures were vital to the success of peacekeeping missions, which were becoming increasingly complex. There was a need, in that connection, to enhance the Organization's capacity for information management and strategic analysis and the ability of Headquarters to plan and support peace operations.

25. Regarding the report introduced by the Secretary-General (A/55/207 and Add.1), his delegation supported a measured increase in resources for electoral assistance, which it regarded as an integral part of post-conflict peace-building. It also endorsed the strengthening of needs assessment missions, which were a prerequisite for electoral assistance activities. It supported in principle the strengthening of the capacity of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations so as to ensure effective support of peacekeeping operations in the field. Over the past decade, as peacekeeping

activities had expanded and contracted, the Organization had learned the painful lessons of first losing, and then having to rebuild, valuable staff capacity and expertise. Staff shortages were acutely felt in some sections of the Department. However, the Secretary-General's request for 181 additional support account posts required more detailed justification. There was a need for a comprehensive review, based on objective management and productivity criteria, to determine a baseline staffing level that would allow the Department to respond flexibly to changing needs.

26. The report of the Secretary-General did not address the financial implications in respect of each individual peace operation such as "quick impact projects", disarmament, demobilization and reintegration activities, and human rights activities proposed, nor did it address the recommendation concerning the conversion of support account posts to the regular budget and other matters still under consideration. Any future increase in resources for peace operations should not come at the expense of resources for development.

27. Lastly, his delegation was concerned about the number of qualified staff, particularly young staff members, leaving the Organization. That problem should be addressed as a matter of priority. He looked forward, in that connection, to the successful implementation of the current human resources management reform initiatives.

28. Mr. Holbrooke (United States of America) welcomed the Secretary-General's bold and timely initiative in establishing the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations. The Organization faced mounting demands for increasingly complex operations in the most vulnerable parts of the globe. Against that background, it was the responsibility of Member States to overcome their differences, which were minor and manageable, and to take decisive steps to ensure that the Organization could realize its ambitious and ever important peacekeeping goals.

29. He was pleased to note that the Fifth Committee was working to make the peacekeeping scale more equitable and up to date. With regard to operational reform, he welcomed the practical report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations. Now, the Committee must take up the critical question of resources. It was well known that the Organization's most challenging and important operations faced

desperate shortfalls in terms of troops, equipment and training and that the capacity of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations was inadequate. Currently, there were only 400 staff members to manage 58,000 men and women serving in 15 peacekeeping operations around the world, and, with the loss of gratis personnel, the Department's military expertise had been reduced from over 100 officers to a mere 32. He therefore welcomed the Secretary-General's intention to conduct a comprehensive review of the Department and looked forward to the development of a global logistical strategy, a comprehensive staffing strategy and an "on-call list" to facilitate rapid deployment. Other priorities included the restructuring and strengthening of the Military and Civilian Police Division, inter alia through the establishment of a legal advice capacity; the strengthening of the Office of Operations and the Field Administration and Logistics Division; and the enhancement of the Organization's capacity in the areas of policy planning and information analysis and of the public information component of peace operations. Also, there was a need for an additional Assistant Secretary-General, as recommended by the Panel, to help manage the Department effectively. The Secretary-General's statement that any increase in staff must be accompanied by human resources and management reform was most welcome. Troop-contributing countries must have a stronger role in the consultative process and in the personnel structure of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

30. The concern that peacekeeping reform might be undertaken at the expense of funds for development, was unfounded. Indeed, peacekeeping could be essential for development, as it had been in Mozambique, where effective peacekeeping had contributed to the attainment of the highest economic growth rate in Africa.

31. He recognized that there was deep concern about his country's arrears and their effect on peacekeeping operations, in particular, the delays in reimbursing troop-contributing countries. The current United States administration took that problem very seriously. At the end of 1999, the United States had paid down \$100 million of its arrears to the United Nations, and it was preparing to remit an additional \$582 million by the end of the year. It should be noted that, in fact, overall United States contributions to the United Nations had increased dramatically. In the fiscal year 2000/2001,

his Government would contribute \$3.6 billion to the United Nations, including voluntary contributions; that represented an increase of almost \$1 billion, which had been fully supported by the United States Congress. It was essential that the necessary steps should be taken to place the Organization on a stable financial footing and thus ensure that the next Congress would continue that very positive trend.

32. For people in strife-torn areas, the presence of a United Nations peace operation often meant the difference between life and death. Unless Member States moved decisively, those who threatened peacekeepers across the globe might draw the conclusion that the United Nations lacked the will and cohesion to perform that basic function. Peacekeepers deserved the support of Member States and a credible structure to maintain and manage peacekeeping operations.

33. Mr. Erdős (Hungary) said that in the past decade the United Nations had had to face unprecedented challenges in peacekeeping operations owing to the growing demand for such operations, the increasingly complex nature of the activities and a glaring lack of resources. During Hungary's membership in the Security Council, his delegation had seen how unwieldy United Nations peacekeeping efforts could be. The situation had not improved, and his delegation therefore strongly supported the proposals aimed at providing the United Nations with the tools it required in order to overcome the difficulties which it had recently encountered.

34. The Committee currently had before it reliable documentation which demonstrated all too clearly the enormous gap between the demands of the times and the Organization's ability to meet its commitments. His delegation urged that an early start should be made to implement the proposals put forward by the Secretary-General. In view of the Organization's recent bitter experience, the international community had no time to lose in commencing a review and reform of United Nations peacekeeping operations. At the same time, that task would demand careful reflection because of the wide range of United Nations activities.

35. As had been correctly pointed out at the Millennium Summit, economic and social development remained the cornerstone of the Organization's activities. The task of making the United Nations more effective and resolute in its peacekeeping operations

should in no way be considered incompatible with that endeavour. Indeed, the chances for development depended to a great extent on the success of peacekeeping operations. His delegation hoped that the Committee would be able to help by ensuring that the resources were available for urgently needed action in the field of peacekeeping operations.

36. **Mr. Galuška** (Czech Republic) said that the commitments made by the Heads of State and Government in the Millennium Declaration regarding the implementation of the proposals in the report of the Panel were very important for the future of the United Nations. The time had come for a comprehensive reform of the whole peacekeeping system. While detailed consideration of the far-reaching recommendations in the Panel's report would require some time, that should not serve as a pretext for procrastination. The Committee's work was of the utmost importance and should be given priority by all delegations in order to ensure that concrete results were achieved before Christmas. The Czech Republic, which contributed both financial resources and troops to peacekeeping operations, offered its unequivocal support for the changes proposed by the Panel.

37. **Ms. Plepyte** (Lithuania) said that, as history demonstrated, some United Nations peacekeeping missions had not achieved their objectives, owing to inadequate resources or mandates or because of a lack of a comprehensive vision. Her delegation concurred with the view of the Secretary-General that the capability of the United Nations Headquarters to provide support for United Nations peacekeepers in the field was seriously limited. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations was stretched too thin and immediate priority should be given to strengthening it in terms of both personnel and funding.

38. A number of the recommendations put forward in the Panel's report needed comprehensive review and study. To that end, significant efforts had already been made by other United Nations bodies. The Security Council and the Secretariat had already set out their views concerning the Panel's recommendations, and the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and the Advisory Committee would, it was hoped, soon conclude and report on their work.

39. It was important to proceed with the implementation of those recommendations that could be implemented beginning in January 2001. While

some recommendations deserved more profound consideration, the desire expressed at the Millennium Summit to consider the recommendations of the Panel expeditiously must be respected. Enhancement of the peacekeeping functions of the United Nations must not in any way overshadow the Organization's development activities, in particular those aimed at eradicating poverty and addressing the special needs of Africa, as those activities were complementary to peacekeeping operations.

40. **Ms. Silot Bravo** (Cuba) noted that the Fifth Committee had yet to receive the reports on the Panel's report to be submitted by the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee), which were still actively engaged in completing their work. It also did not yet have the report of the Advisory Committee concerning the decisions to be taken by the Fourth Committee. Her delegation hoped that, in accordance with the rules of the General Assembly which applied to all items on the agenda, the formal debate and consideration of the budget implications of the Panel's report would not take place until the views of the Fourth Committee were known and the report of the Advisory Committee was available. It would make a formal statement on the substance of the matter at that time.

41. **The Chairman** assured the representative of Cuba that the Committee would not begin a formal debate on the subject until the report of the Advisory Committee was available.

The meeting rose at noon.

**General Assembly**

Fifty-fifth session

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Fifth Committee**Summary record of the 33rd meeting**

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 29 November 2000, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Rosenthal (Guatemala)
*Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative
and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Mselle*

Contents

Agenda item 134: Financing of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (*continued*)

Agenda item 133: Financing of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (*continued*)

Agenda item 117: Programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 (*continued*)

Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (continued)

Request for a subvention to the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research

Administrative and financial implications of the decisions and recommendations contained in the report of the International Civil Service Commission for the year 2000

Revised estimates under section 7 (International Court of Justice)

Agenda item 12: Report of the Economic and Social Council (Chap. I, Chap. VII, sects. B and C, chap. IX)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 134: Financing of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor
(continued) (A/C.5/55/L.9)

1. **Mr. Park Hae-yun** (Republic of Korea), introducing draft resolution A/C.5/55/L.9, expressed the hope that it would be adopted by consensus.

2. *Draft resolution A/C.5/55/L.9 was adopted.*

3. **Ms. Sanchez** (Cuba) said that, in the light of Cuba's strong support for the activities of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), her delegation had joined the consensus on the draft resolution, although it regretted that there had not been sufficient time, when the item had been considered, to address appropriately the following concerns raised by Member States and by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ): the inclusion in the proposed budget of UNTAET of proposals likely to increase the cost of the force; the considerable increase in the proposed staffing of the Office of Human Rights Affairs, the duplication of effort in the functions of some of the posts proposed and the assignment of judicial functions to some of the Office's staff; the use of a budget proposal to introduce a mandate for the establishment of a national truth and reconciliation commission; and the lack of clarity in the relationship between the UNTAET assessed budget and the East Timor consolidated budget. Much of the information requested had been made available only as the text of the draft resolution was being approved. It was to be hoped that, in future, the necessary time would be allowed for the General Assembly to perform fully its proper role in the consideration of budgetary proposals.

Agenda item 133: Financing of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo
(continued) (A/C.5/55/L.10)

4. **Mr. Ramos** (Portugal), introducing draft resolution A/C.5/55/L.10, said that, since the text had been adopted by consensus in the informal consultations, he hoped that the Committee would adopt it without a vote.

5. *Draft resolution A/C.5/55/L.10 was adopted.*

Agenda item 117: Programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 (continued)

Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (continued) (A/55/305-S/2000/809, A/55/502 and A/55/507 and Add.1)

6. **Mr. Sampson** (Nigeria), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that no statement had been made on behalf of the Group at the Committee's preceding meeting because the programme of work issued by the Bureau had not indicated that the Secretary-General would introduce his reports on the Panel's report or that a general discussion would follow his address to the Committee.

7. The Group of 77 and China attached great importance to the provision of adequate resources for all peacekeeping activities, which were an important function of the United Nations. However, the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations was the legislative body responsible for peacekeeping issues. The Fifth Committee should therefore not begin to consider the resource requirements for the implementation of the recommendations in the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (A/55/305-S/2000/809) until the Special Committee had completed its consideration of those recommendations and the Special Political and Decolonization (Fourth) Committee had taken its decisions thereon, based on the recommendations of the Special Committee, and until the Advisory Committee had submitted its recommendations.

8. **Mr. Darwish** (Egypt) reaffirmed the importance that his country, which contributed troops and equipment to various United Nations peacekeeping operations, attached to all peacekeeping efforts. The Panel on United Nations Peace Operations had made a valuable effort to evaluate the shortcomings of peacekeeping operations and to present specific proposals to improve the military, human, financial and managerial capacities of the United Nations. Because the strengthening of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations would not in itself remedy all those shortcomings, an integrated and balanced approach was needed to address all problem areas, from the manner in which the Secretariat prepared and presented its recommendations to the Security Council to the way the Security Council formulated and modified the mandates of peacekeeping operations and to the means of improving the Secretariat's management of such

operations and the political, military and strategic advice it gave to them.

9. There were many commendable proposals in the plan put forward by the Secretary-General in his report (A/55/507), but the ones aimed at strengthening the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and other Secretariat departments would only yield the desired results if three basic conditions were met. First, the commitments of Member States, in particular those of the Western countries and the major Powers, must be translated into a genuine political will and concrete military participation in the field, without discrimination between operations. Second, consultation between the Security Council and the troop-contributing countries must be institutionalized and codified, as stipulated in the Charter of the United Nations. Third, the financial resources required for the full success of peacekeeping operations must be ensured; the chronic deficit faced by the Organization had left it in a situation where it had been obliged to reduce the number of troops deployed so that missions could not be accomplished in the manner desired.

10. While it welcomed the voluntary contributions made for development assistance by many countries, including the United States of America, Japan, the European Union and Norway, his delegation noted that the United Nations had for a number of years been adopting a negative or zero-growth budget for development. It was important to allay the legitimate fears of the developing countries that, if that situation persisted, resources required for peacekeeping operations would be withheld from development activities.

11. The Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations was currently studying the recommendations of the Panel, and the consideration of resource requirements by the Fifth Committee should be deferred until the Special Committee had completed its recommendations and the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee had issued their reports on the financial implications thereof. The necessary legislative mandate for the proposals would then be in place before the financial and human resources were made available. Those resources represented the preliminary and urgent stage of the plan for the implementation of the Panel's recommendations and it was expected that, before subsequent stages were embarked upon, the Secretariat would have prepared a comprehensive review of the structure and functions of

the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, as requested in previous years by the Special Committee.

12. Mr. Pal (India) said that he shared the views expressed by the representative of Nigeria on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. At the Committee's preceding meeting, it had been said that, if the Secretary-General's request for emergency resources was not granted, peacekeeping operations and personnel would suffer, and that delegations which questioned the need for such resources had no interest in peacekeeping, particularly in Africa. However, India had been among the top troop contributors for the past 40 years, and had participated in every peacekeeping operation in Africa. In addition, it had made a voluntary contribution of \$100,000 to the Joint Military Commission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It had therefore earned the right to question whether the proposals being made addressed the real needs of peacekeeping.

13. On the basis of India's first-hand experience of the many crises which had arisen in peacekeeping operations, he could affirm that nothing the Secretariat could have done would have prevented or resolved those crises. It was therefore puzzled by the claim that peacekeeping and peacekeepers would suffer unless the Department of Peacekeeping Operations was given more staff immediately. The real problems in peacekeeping were the frequent lack of political will in the Security Council and the reluctance of the developed countries to contribute troops. There were other problems, too; only the preceding day, in the Security Council, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for East Timor had described as "absurd" the fact that UNTAET spent \$10 on itself for every \$1 it spent administering East Timor. Such phenomena were not sudden emergencies, but long-standing problems that would not be cured by the Panel's recommendations.

14. In the early 1990s, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations had managed much larger bodies of troops with roughly the same number of staff as it had at the current time, yet it had not claimed to suffer from a staffing emergency. Moreover, that Department and the Department of Political Affairs had been untouched by the post reductions of the past eight years. The latter Department had more Professional-level staff than India's entire Ministry of External Affairs. The post reductions in the Secretariat had affected mainly the departments dealing with economic

and social issues, whose situation was at least as serious as that of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. No additional resources had been sought for any of the departments that followed up the major United Nations conferences of the 1990s. In the light of those facts, the assertion that any failure to implement the Panel's recommendations would cause the United Nations to fail made no sense.

15. The Panel's report indicated that the Executive Committee on Peace and Security (ECPS) established under the Secretary-General's reform programme had failed to meet the urgent need to gather and analyse information for peacekeeping, yet the General Assembly had never before received information to that effect, despite its request for a report on the implementation of the reforms. The expensive new unit being proposed to serve that purpose would continue to tell the Security Council only what it wanted to hear and would not make the slightest difference to peacekeeping operations or peacekeepers.

16. The Committee could not make an informed assessment of the staffing needs of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations until the review of the Department's functioning, which the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations had requested for years, was made available. The report which the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations had undertaken to submit early in 2001, together with the Secretary-General's resource requests under the support account, should provide the basis for decisions on the Department's structure and size. His delegation was prepared to consider any stop-gap arrangements that might be needed, once the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and the Advisory Committee had scrutinized them. However, such additional resources must be kept to a minimum and the urgency of providing them must be justified; a request for 249 additional posts, which represented nearly 60 per cent of the Department's authorized strength, could hardly be termed an emergency request.

17. The sudden call for emergency resources was extraordinary for four reasons: first, the General Assembly had never before been told that the reformed structures were inadequate, despite its request for that type of information; second, at the time when the current biennial budget and the support account had been adopted, no emergency had been claimed, even though a number of peacekeeping operations had then been at the initial stage that made the greatest demands

on the Secretariat; third, the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations had never been informed, at its 2000 session, of any systemic crisis in the Secretariat that could only be cured by emergency resources; and fourth, no Secretariat official had told the Committee for Programme and Coordination, at its June 2000 session, that either the Department of Peacekeeping Operations or the Department of Political Affairs was in distress.

18. The nature of the so-called emergency was therefore unclear. His delegation's questions only reflected its desire to strengthen the United Nations. The Committee's discussions on the subject should respect the views of all delegations; differences of opinion could not be bridged by patronizing and deprecatory references to the sincerity or motivation of delegations holding different views.

19. **Mr. Hussein** (Ethiopia) said that his country attached the greatest importance to the implementation of the Panel's recommendations, which represented a practical means of making the United Nations more effective in maintaining peace and security, pursuant to paragraph 9 of the Millennium Declaration. In the light of the recent rapid increase in the number and scope of peacekeeping activities, the current institutional framework, resources and staffing level appeared inadequate. The close links between conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction could not be over-emphasized. The Panel's recommendations on institutional strengthening, staffing and funding were timely and the Secretary-General's request for their implementation should be granted.

20. At the same time, equal attention should be paid to the provision of resources for development. It was ironic that the approval of more resources for peacekeeping was being urgently requested, while the approval of even modest increases in the budget for the Organization's development activities was very difficult to obtain. However, he agreed that peacekeeping and development were mutually complementary and urgent remedial action was needed to address the many problems currently encountered in peacekeeping activities.

21. **Mr. Chaudry** (Pakistan) said that his country had consistently contributed to peacekeeping operations and attached great importance to the Organization's role in that area. However, he agreed with the representative of Nigeria that the Committee should

discuss the Secretary-General's proposals only when all the relevant documentation had become available, particularly the report of the Special Political and Decolonization (Fourth) Committee and the recommendations of the Advisory Committee. He was disappointed to note the terms used by one delegation, at the Committee's preceding meeting, to describe delegations that did not share its views. Since such language would not facilitate the discussions to be held on the issue, he recommended greater restraint.

22. **Mr. Valdivieso** (Colombia), speaking on behalf of the Rio Group, said that the Group recognized the need to strengthen the structure and functioning of peacekeeping-related mechanisms in order to increase their efficiency and thereby enhance the Organization's credibility in the maintenance of international peace and security. Conflict prevention and peace-building were important facets of the Organization's work.

23. The Rio Group countries were closely following the progress of negotiations in the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and the Special Political and Decolonization (Fourth) Committee, and looked forward to the relevant report of the Advisory Committee, which would facilitate the Fifth Committee's deliberations on the budgetary implications of the decisions taken by the competent legislative bodies. The aim was to provide the United Nations with a more dynamic and efficient structure for designing and deploying peacekeeping operations.

24. **Mr. Bhattarai** (Nepal) said that he supported the statement made by the representative of Nigeria on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. The Panel's report would enhance the Committee's understanding of the successes and failures of United Nations peacekeeping activities in recent years. The complementarity between that report and the Secretary-General's report to the Millennium Assembly (A/54/2000) should serve as a guide to the implementation of the Panel's recommendations. Nepal, as a committed contributor to United Nations peacekeeping efforts, looked forward to the implementation of many significant elements of the report, which would greatly improve the launching, management and closure of peace operations. At the same time, the process of change must be managed cautiously to ensure that it did not result in irreversible errors.

25. Although the United Nations should be properly equipped to keep peace in the world, peace could not be sustained in the absence of development. The Organization's priorities and approaches to peace and development must be reconciled. Some Member States were in favour of expanded peace operations and strengthened command and control structures at Headquarters, while others felt that more resources should be directed towards economic and social development, which would ultimately bring about peace and stability. Those differences could be reconciled through a clearer definition of priorities and a common resolve to strengthen activities for both peace and development.

26. The Panel's report raised a number of fundamental questions. If developed countries continued to avoid sending their troops to United Nations peacekeeping operations, a serious imbalance would emerge between peacekeeping personnel, most of whom came from poor countries, and the Headquarters command and control structures, which were run by personnel from rich countries. That imbalance should also be examined in the context of humanitarian intervention. The Committee must consider whether such an imbalance would result in a situation where Headquarters structures exercised unnecessary influence on troops in the field and distorted their mandates; whether it would marginalize the contribution of field commanders to decision-making in the Security Council; and whether the full implementation of the Panel's recommendations would result in military structures that were unsuitable for United Nations operations. Those questions must also be considered in connection with the mandate of the International Criminal Court, particularly if the Court had to seek the Security Council's approval to prosecute persons who came under the Court's jurisdiction.

27. The Committee must have a clear and comprehensive understanding of the potential implications of the Panel's recommendations before it took action. Member States must not create a United Nations that would compromise their collective interests or come into conflict with the international environment. Nepal looked forward to receiving the reports of the Advisory Committee and of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, which was the legislative body responsible for considering peacekeeping in all its aspects.

Request for a subvention to the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (A/C.5/55/15)

Administrative and financial implications of the decisions and recommendations contained in the report of the International Civil Service Commission for the Year 2000 (A/55/629)

Revised estimates under section 7 (International Court of Justice) (A/55/7/Add.2 and A/C.5/55/21)

28. Mr. Mselle (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee had been unable to finalize its reports on the request for a subvention to the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) and on the administrative and financial implications of the decisions and recommendations contained in the report of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) for the year 2000 in time for their translation and subsequent issuance in all six official languages. However, the text of his statement would be circulated informally to the members of the Fifth Committee. The report of the Advisory Committee on the revised estimates under section 7 (International Court of Justice) was contained in document A/55/7/Add.2.

29. The Advisory Committee had considered the note by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/55/15) on a request for a subvention to UNIDIR of \$213,000 for the year 2001. The request was made in accordance with the recommendation of the Board of Trustees of the Institute. The programme budget of the United Nations for the biennium 2000-2001, under section 4 (Disarmament), contained a provision of \$426,000, representing the United Nations subvention to the Institute for 2000-2001. The subvention, which was used to cover the costs of the director and the administration, was important not only economically, but also, in the Board's view, to ensure the independence of the Institute. As stated in the report of the Director of the Institute (A/55/267), the Board regretted that, for several years, the subvention received from the United Nations had not been adjusted for inflation. The Advisory Committee intended to consider the matter in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003. At its fifty-fourth session, the General Assembly had authorized a subvention of \$213,000 for 2001; at its current session, it was being asked to approve an

amount of \$213,000 for 2001. The Advisory Committee recommended that the Fifth Committee should approve that request.

30. The Advisory Committee had considered the statement submitted by the Secretary-General (A/55/629) on the administrative and financial implications of the decisions and recommendations contained in the report of ICSC for the year 2000 and, in particular, the implications of those decisions and recommendations for the programme budget of the United Nations for the biennium 2000-2001. It had considered only those recommendations referred to in the Secretary-General's statement.

31. The annual financial implications of the recommendations of the International Civil Service Commission on the common system amounted to \$15.8 million, of which \$5.9 million (net of staff assessment) was estimated to relate to the United Nations regular budget. The Advisory Committee noted from paragraph 3 of the Secretary-General's statement that the increase of 5.1 per cent in the base/floor scale for 2001 would be implemented through the standard method of consolidating post adjustment multiplier points to offset the increase in the base salary scale. The incorporation of post adjustment index points into the base salary was a no-loss/no-gain measure. However, the Advisory Committee wished to point out that, when the post adjustment was next increased, the value of the post adjustment index point would be greater since it was based on a percentage of the base salary.

32. The Commission had conducted surveys of the best prevailing conditions of employment for staff in the General Service, Trades and Crafts, Security Service, Language Teacher and Public Information Assistant categories in New York in May 2000. The results of the survey had become effective as from 1 May 2000. The annual financial implications for the regular budget resulting from the Commission's recommendations on the remuneration of staff in the General Service, Security Service and Public Information Assistant categories and in the Professional and higher categories were estimated at \$3.5 million and \$2.1 million respectively. In addition, for all categories of staff, adjustments to the education grant would result in an additional requirement of approximately \$282,400. The overall impact of the recommendations calculated on the basis of actual dates of implementation would amount to \$5,736,846. That additional requirement would be taken into

consideration in computing the first performance report for the biennium 2000-2001, in accordance with the established procedure. The Advisory Committee had no objection to the estimates of requirements under the regular budget resulting from the Commission's decisions and recommendations.

33. Turning to the report of the Advisory Committee on the revised estimates under section 7 (International Court of Justice) (A/55/7/Add.2), he said that, owing to the large increase in the Court's caseload, the Secretary-General had requested an additional appropriation of \$606,100 under section 7 of the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 in order to allow the Court to discharge its functions. To address the needs of the Court, the Secretary-General had proposed the establishment of 12 temporary posts for translators and 2 General Service posts at a cost of \$488,700. The Advisory Committee had been informed that establishing those temporary posts would be less expensive than hiring freelance and external translators. It therefore recommended that the General Assembly should approve the additional appropriation requested.

34. **Mr. Repasch** (United States of America) said that his delegation supported the important work of UNIDIR. However, as the Secretary-General himself had stated, the provision of subventions from the regular budget of the United Nations was not appropriate and the practice should not become established. His delegation would approve the request for the subvention only if the Institute submitted a plan indicating how it intended to achieve self-sustainment.

35. Regarding the request for an additional appropriation for the International Court of Justice, he noted that the Court had been slow to implement modern management techniques. He understood that the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) was preparing a report on the issue and he would like to know what the status of that report was. The Committee should be provided with a summary of the report before it took action on the request.

36. **Ms. Sanchez** (Cuba) said that it was not clear to her delegation why the Advisory Committee had been unable to complete its reports on the request for a subvention to UNIDIR and on the administrative and financial implications of the decisions and recommendations contained in the report of ICSC for the year 2000. The Committee should defer

consideration of those matters until the reports of the Advisory Committee were available.

37. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that it would not be unreasonable to request the Board of Trustees of UNIDIR to indicate whether the Institute could survive without a subvention from the regular budget of the United Nations. However, the subvention was a relatively small amount that promoted the independence of the Institute.

38. Regarding the additional appropriation requested for the International Court of Justice, he said that the Court had taken a number of steps to modernize its operations, but the needs of the Conference and Language Services could not be addressed by implementing new management techniques or through automation. The Secretariat might wish to convey the question on the status of the JIU report on the Court to the Unit itself.

39. In response to the issue raised by the representative of Cuba, he pointed out that the oral reports he had made to the Committee, together with the texts of other oral reports made during the session, would be consolidated in a single report, which would be issued as an official document of the General Assembly.

40. **Ms. Sanchez** (Cuba) said that the Committee should adhere to its usual practice and should not proceed until the reports of ACABQ were available.

41. **Ms. Rodsmoen** (Norway) said that her delegation strongly supported the work of UNIDIR, to which Norway was one of the main contributors. The Institute's financial situation was a cause for concern. She therefore urged the Committee to approve without further delay the subvention requested, which was a small amount compared with the Institute's total budget.

42. **Mr. Acakpo-Satchivi** (Secretary of the Committee), replying to a question put by the Chairman, said that, in the absence of a written report by the Advisory Committee on a particular issue, the Chairman of that Committee had, in the past, made oral reports to the Fifth Committee. The presentation of oral reports did not therefore represent a departure from the Committee's usual practice.

43. **Mr. Gaubert (France)**, speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that the Committee should proceed with its work at once.

44. **Ms. Sanchez (Cuba)** said that her delegation could not proceed without having all the necessary information at its disposal. She requested that, in future, the reports of the Advisory Committee should be issued in writing in time for delegations to give them proper consideration.

45. **Mr. Nakkari (Syrian Arab Republic)** said that the practice of allowing the Chairman of the Advisory Committee to make oral reports to the Fifth Committee was exceptional. As a rule, the Fifth Committee should not take up any issue unless all the relevant documents were available in all six official languages. The importance of that point could not be overstated. He understood that the Advisory Committee had a heavy workload. Often, it was unable to finalize its own reports because of delays in the transmission to it of the reports of the Secretariat that it was to consider. The Bureau should look into that problem. In the meantime, the Committee should defer its consideration of the matter before it until the relevant reports of the Advisory Committee were available in all six official languages.

46. **The Chairman** said that he had taken note of the concerns expressed by the representatives of Cuba and the Syrian Arab Republic. There was, however, a need for pragmatism and flexibility. The Committee's past practice led him to conclude that, in exceptional circumstances, it could consider an oral report by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee. No action would be taken, however, until the informal consultations were concluded and the documentation in question was available.

Agenda item 12: Report of the Economic and Social Council (A/55/3, chap. I, chap. VII (sections B and C) and chap. IX)

47. **The Chairman** suggested that the Committee should recommend that the General Assembly should take note of the chapters of the report of the Economic and Social Council which had been allocated to the Fifth Committee.

48. *It was so decided.*

The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.



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Fifty-fifth session

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Summary record of the 34th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 4 December 2000, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Rosenthal (Guatemala)
*Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative
and Budgetary Questions:* Mr. Mselle

Contents

Agenda item 138: Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping forces in the
Middle East (*continued*)

(b) United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (*continued*)

Organization of work

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 138: Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping forces in the Middle East (continued)

(b) United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (continued)

Introduction of draft resolution A/C.5/55/L.11

1. **Mr. Hassan** (Nigeria), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, introduced draft resolution A/C.5/55/L.11.
2. **Mr. Diab** (Lebanon), noting that an omission had occurred in the draft resolution, requested that the words "of 15 June 2000" should be inserted at the end of the fourth preambular paragraph.
3. **The Chairman** said that the Committee would take a decision on the draft resolution as revised at a later date.

Organization of work

4. The Chairman expressed the concern of the Bureau about the large number of items remaining on the agenda. Notwithstanding the Committee's best efforts and desire to advance in its work, the scope of the agenda items allocated to it for the current session and the strong will of members to forge a consensus on as many issues as possible had led to a substantial backlog. The Committee had already taken steps to deal with that problem, for example by identifying priorities for consideration, by organizing informal evening meetings and by requesting an extension of the current part of the session until 20 December.
5. Unfortunately, the President of the General Assembly had communicated his intention to conclude the current part of the session by 15 December, which would place the Committee under immense pressure to finish its work. In those circumstances, he called upon the Committee to consider holding meetings on Saturdays; that would be preferable to scheduling night meetings. He would personally contact the President of the General Assembly to ask once again that the current part of the session should be extended in the light of the exceptional burden faced by the Fifth Committee.

6. One of the items still to be discussed was the scale of assessments. In any intergovernmental organization, that subject would give rise to a good deal of debate, as it involved a host of methodological, practical, conceptual and political questions. In the opinion of the Bureau, it would be most useful if a series of informal consultations could be devoted to the discussion of that topic with the participation of the Permanent Representatives. The aim would be to take stock of the current situation and to exchange views and impressions in a frank and constructive dialogue on the best way to move forward.

7. **Ms. Sánchez** (Cuba) said that the Committee should consider scheduling additional meetings for the discussion of the scale of assessments for the regular budget.

8. The Chairman said that the Bureau would take that suggestion into consideration when drawing up the programme of work.

9. **Mr. Nakkari** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that the Bureau had done a commendable job of organizing the Committee's work. That was no easy task in a year when human resources management was on the agenda together with so many other urgent matters. The Committee's workload had been complicated in part by its failure to adopt a scale of assessments the previous year and in part by the fact that new agenda items were being added even at a time when other Committees had completed their work.

10. Concerning the programme of work, he said that the adoption of the scale of assessments for the regular budget must be given priority over the consideration of the scale of assessments for peacekeeping operations. Noting the importance of human resources management as an agenda item and the fact that only one meeting a week had been devoted to it in the current programme of work, he asked the Bureau to devote more time to the discussion of that item.

11. **The Chairman** assured the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic that the Bureau would take his comments into consideration when deciding on the programme of work for Saturday meetings.

The meeting rose at 10.40 a.m.